

THE BRAHMAVÂDIN.

“एकं सत् विभावहुधावदन्ति.”

“That which exists is One: sages call it variously.”—*Rigveda*, I. 164. 46.

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VARUNA, MITRA, AND ARYAMAN.

1. He whom Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman protect—that person soon prevails against enemies.
2. That mortal whom they enrich as if with their own arms, and whom they save from the foe—he prospers ever without harm.
3. The kings destroy in their very presence the enemies of these (worshippers) and destroy also their unapproachable fortresses, and take away sin from them (the worshippers)
4. O A'dityas, thornless and easy is the path for him who goes according to Law. There is here no offering that you may not receive.
5. O A'dityas, whatever sacrifice you as guides lead on by the right path to completion,—may that go for your enjoyment.
6. That mortal, unhurt, gains in abundance all glorious wealth, and obtains children also of his own.
7. Friends, how shall we accomplish the praise (and worship) of Mitra and Aryaman? Mighty is the form of Varuna!
8. I do not speak to you against him who hurts, and him who reviles, the worshipper of the gods. Only with rich offerings do I serve you in all possible ways.
9. Let not (man) desire to speak ill (of others), but be afraid (of it) as of him who holds the four (dice) ready for the throw.

Rigveda I. 11

Notes and Thoughts.

The Birthday Anniversary of BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA will be celebrated on Sunday the 16th of February, 1896, at Rani Rashmoni's KATHAL, DAKSHINESWAR, Calcutta.

We publish in the Open Column the Notes of a Class Lesson on *Karma-Yoga* by Swami Vivekananda, specially reported for our columns. This class was held in New York on the 13th of December 1895, and it has been arranged to obtain from time to time for publication in the *Brahmavadin* notes of such interesting and important class lessons by the Swami.

The subjects of Swami Vivekananda's free lectures referred to by our American Correspondent are as follows:—(1) The claims of Religion: Its Truth and Utility. (2) The Ideal of an Universal Religion. How it must embrace different types of minds and methods. (3) The Cosmos. The order of Creation and Dissolution. (4) Cosmos (continued.)

Says Mr. Stead in the last issue of the *Borderland*—"On no Apostles' Creed nor on any such narrow foundation can we hope to rear the temple of the federated faiths of man. To us of the Western world the Apostles' Creed may be the highest attainable embodiment of the maxim of Divine truth which we are able to assimilate. But to the Hindus it may be foolishness and useless for good compared with familiar formulæ in which their own saints and sages have embodied the same essential truth. It is no derogation to the truth of the Apostles' Creed to urge that we should not in our devotion to its letter refuse to secure the beneficent application of its spirit through other channels and by other formulas."

The *New York Herald* speaking of Swami Vivekananda's Lectures in America says—

"One thing is not fit for all; everything is not fit for one." This maxim of Goethe is the rule to which the great Hindu preacher Swami Vivekananda strictly adheres in his propagation of the *Yoga* philosophy in this country and to which he owes the success he achieved in gaining followers.

According to the Hindu preacher, the greatest misfortune to befall the world would be if all mankind were to recognise and accept but one religion, one universal form of worship, one standard of morality. This would be the death-blow to all religions and spiritual progress. Instead of trying to hasten this disastrous event by inducing persons, through good or evil methods, to conform to our own highest ideal of truth, we ought rather to endeavour to remove all obstacles which prevent men from developing in accordance with their own highest ideals, and, making the vain attempt to establish one universal religion.

The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religion, is but one—re-union with god, or, what amounts to the same, with the divinity

which is every man's true nature. But while the aim is one, the method of attaining may vary with the different temperaments of men.

Both the goal and the methods employed for reaching it are called *Yoga*, a word derived from the same Sanskrit root as the English yoke, meaning "to join," to join us to our reality, God. There are various such *Yogas* or methods of union—but the chief ones are Karma, Bhakti, Raj and Gnana Yoga.

In the *Sargakhand* of Padma Purana Mândhata asks Narada, "If the division into four *Varnas* be according to the colour of the skin do we not find in all the *Varnas* the mixture of all the colours? Lust, anger, fear, covetousness, grief, thought, hunger and weariness, do not these sway all alike? The bodies of all secrete sweat, urine, faeces, and phlegm, bile and blood, whence, then is the distinction of *Varnas*?" Narada replies, "There is no distinction of *Varna*. The whole world is *Brahmamaya*. All are first created by Brahma, then, by their actions they come to possess the distinction of *Varna*." He next describes how members of one *Varna* become those of another and the duties which determine each of the four *Varnas*.

A Yaksha asks—In what does Brahmanhood consist, O king, in birth, in conduct, in study, in Vedic learning? declare this distinctly. Yudhishthira replies—Hear, Yaksha, neither birth, nor study, nor Vedic learning are the causes of Brahmanhood; the cause is conduct alone, without a doubt. Good conduct is to be carefully adhered to, by a Brahman especially. He who is not destitute in respect of conduct is not destitute, but he who is ruined in conduct is ruined. The man whose conduct is bad, though he knows the four Ved is worse than a Sudra.

—Mahābhārata

It is a meek and blessed influence, stealing in as it were, unawares upon the heart, it comes quietly and without excitement: it has no terror, no gloom in its approaches, it does not rouse up the passions; it is untrammelled by the creeds, and unshadowed by the superstitions of man, it is fresh from the hands of its Author, glowing from the immediate presence of the Great Spirit, which pervades and quickens it; it is written on the arched sky, it looks out from every star, it is on the sailing cloud, and in the invisible wind; it is among the hills and valleys of the earth, where the shrubless mountain-top pierces the thin atmosphere of eternal winter, or where the mighty forest fluctuates before the strong wind, with its dark waves of green foliage; it is spread out, like a legible language, upon the broad face of the unsleeping ocean, it is the poetry of nature, it is this which uplifts the spirit within us, until it is strong enough to overlook the shadows of our place of probation; which breaks, link after link, the chain that binds us to materiality; and which opens to our imagination a world of spiritual beauty and holiness.

—Ruskin

The Brahmavadin

SATURDAY, 1ST FEBRUARY 1896.

THE SOCIAL IDEAL OF THE VEDĀNTA.

To those, who know that the Vedānta is an embodiment of a later religious dispensation than that which is represented by the ritualistic Vedic religion, it would appear as thoroughly natural that this later religious dispensation should have a newer and more developed social ideal. It is indeed among the recognised functions of religion to inspire ethical and social ideals, to place before man from time to time the goal of all the varied forms of human effort towards the attainment of perfection. The key to the ethics of the Vedānta is to be found in the first two verses of the *Isāvara-gyanishad* which are as follow :-

ईशावास्यामिदसर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्या जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मागृधः कस्य स्विक्रानं ॥
कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतंसमा ।
एव त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्मलिप्यते नरे ॥

"All this, whatsoever moves on earth, is worthy to be inhabited by the Lord. Therefore enjoy life by resignation. Do not covet the wealth of any man.

"Yet a man has to wish to live a hundred years performing works. It is so with you; there is no way other than this. work will not (thus) cling to man."

The *Bhagavadgītā* also teaches the same great lesson of living a life of work and resignation without coveting any wealth. If the Lord is in all and is all in all, can man justly have any egoistic aspirations? And can he say that he will not work because the free and full surrender of the fruits of work is enjoined upon him? Modern European philosophy even in its ardour of strengthening and sustaining the very foundations of belief may hold 'that 'reasonable self-love' has a legitimate position among ethical ends"; but to the Vedāntin, who sees the Lord in all, self-love can never be reasonable at all. All men ought to work and to produce, and no

man ought to set up any claim for anything that any work produces. It must be easy to see how in an ideal arrangement like this all the purposes of the "reasonable self-love" are fulfilled without even the slightest possibility of the most distant touch of selfishness tainting the human heart; for, where all work and produce and none aims at the exclusive appropriation of the fruits of work, all live for each and each lives for all. We know that this is too high an ideal for immediate practical realisation in human societies, as they are constituted now, and may continue for long years to come. But then in this high aim consists the excellence and unique perfection of the ideal.

It may be easily observed that, though, in point of effort and self-surrender, the obligation laid by the Vedānta upon all is the same, there is nothing implied here in the way of asserting anything like the so-called natural equality of men. To the Vedāntin all men are equal only in the sense that the Lord is in them all. Men's equality of rights or privileges or powers the Vedānta does not know; it only knows that they are equal because of the reasoned nullity of their rights in a world so fully enlivened and actuated by God. The natural and artificial inequalities observable among men do not and cannot form, according to this system of philosophy and religion, a perennial source of acutely sensitive grievance in regard to the conditions that affect the relations between man and man in society. Man's past *Karma* is responsible for his present conditions; and he has his future in his own hands, as the present *Karma* mainly determines the nature of its evolution. The doctrines of re-incarnation and of *Karma* thus account for the inequality of men as they are born and naturally circumstanced, and supply all hearts with the means for the acquisition of hope and strength. It is needless to point out that the Vedāntic doctrine of *Karma* is altogether different from blind fatalism, and endows man with sufficient freedom to make him feel that after all he is himself the architect of his own destiny here and hereafter. Thus ethical self-culture becomes the duty of every man, and the only means by which it can be attained is complete self-abnegation. When the generosity of self-sacrifice is thus expected of man as an obligatory virtue, it follows as a matter of course that he will constantly endeavour to see at

least justice and fair play maintained in the working of all religious and social institutions. Therefore to discard the belief in the so-called natural equality of men is not at all to uphold artificial inequities and injustices in the relations between man and man in any form of social organisation. It may thus be seen that every kind of reasoned Ontological belief must lead to the postulation of an ethical ideal, which, in its turn, gives rise to a social ideal. It has been said by a thoughtful writer on Social Philosophy that the study of social ideals in a philosophic spirit "may be regarded as concerned with the relations of men to each other, with their relations to the material world, and with the development of individual character, in so far as that is affected by these relations." Self-denial, steady work, and the harmonising of all the constituents of character so as to make man naturally and spontaneously work in unison with the Divine Will—these constitute, accordingly the three essential elements of the social ideal of the Vedânta, which condemns in no uncertain language all forms of self-indulgence and the quite modern notion of basing true happiness upon pleasure. The enjoyment of privileges without bearing a corresponding burden of duty is what most men strive after in their ignorance; but in the ideal society of the Vedântin it is all duty and no privilege at all that man has to know and work for.

The best way to comprehend clearly the Vedântic social ideal is to make out the attitude of the Vedânta towards the old social institution of caste and the regulations dependent, thereon. There is no doubt that the period of the great *Mahâbhârata* war was one of unparalleled national activity in the history of Ancient India; and tradition and other forms of available evidence distinctly point to that period as the time when Vedântic thought, which in all probability had its commencement much earlier, found for the first time full expression in the life of the people. Caste must have got itself organised on the basis of heredity long before this period of reaction against its many abuses and injustices. The problem of the origin of caste in India is a complex one, and need not be discussed in this connection. But it is not unimportant to know that in all organised human communities the stratification of the people into different layers takes place in response to natural tendencies. Such differentiation of the people has existed in all ancient communities the history of

which we know more or less, and it exists now in the form of the distinction between classes even among the casteless communities of the West. The difference between castes and classes consists in the former being hereditary and unchangeable while the latter are not so. Moreover in castes we have the monopoly of certain social and other privileges determined by mere birth alone, and professions also become hereditary. In the earlier stages of the development of caste in India it seems to have been possible occasionally for a person of any lower caste to rise to a higher one. But in its fully developed form caste does not allow an individual to pass from a lower to a higher stratum in society; and when a man loses caste he is lost beyond all hope of recovery. Racial aggression and the spirit of aggrandisement have been at the root of this social institution which is still dominantly influencing the life of Aryans and non-Aryans in India; and it must be said to the credit of caste and its conserving power that as an agency for maintaining order and stability in society it has indeed been of very great value. It has been well remarked of caste that "by making family succession and tradition of race the highest law, it denies utterly the individual freedom which strives to go beyond these limits," and that "its ideal is rest." In the old order regulations regarding sacrificial worship, the study and teaching of the Vedas, marriage, and the eating of food, &c., were all made to subserve the ends of Caste; and woman was made to suffer more loss of freedom and have less privileges than man in this inelastic arrangement of social authority.

There is a somewhat abstruse passage in the *Bṛihadâraṇyakopaniṣad* (I 4. 11—15) wherein the four castes are clearly referred to. From this passage we may make out that; (1) in the beginning there was only one caste which, according to Sankara and other commentators, was that of the Brahmins not yet differentiated into Kshatriyas and others; (2) that the other castes became organised one after another to give society strength and stability; (3) that the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas contended against each other as to social supremacy; (4) that at one time the Brahmin may be really greater than the Kshatriya, and at another time the Kshatriya really greater than the Brahmin; (5) that the strength of the Vaisyas is in co-operation and crowding together; (6) that the Sudra is the real nourisher of the whole

of society ; 7) that Law, that is, *Dharma* is higher than the power of castes and kings making the weak man strong and the strong man weak ; (8) that Law and Truth are the same, and (9) that all men must worship the *Atman*—the universal self—as the one goal to go to or the one world to reach. The old order of caste made a distinction between the “twice-born” Aryas and the non-Aryas in point of religion and worship, the Aryan religion being held to belong exclusively to the Aryas. The Vedânta holds that all men must worship the *Atman*, and that under the guidance of Law, which is the same thing as Truth, the lower may become the higher and the higher become the lower. Its religious exclusiveness and the hereditary monopoly of social privileges are both done away with, it is like shattering the very foundation of caste. Caste cannot be caste without its rigidity and impassable barriers, and the Vedânta gives no sanction to either of these characteristics of caste. On this subject the language of the *Gîtâ* is much plainer. In it Sri Krishna says—

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥

IV. 13

“The four castes have been created by me by means of the different distribution of qualities and actions. Know me then to be the author of them although I am actionless and inexhaustible.” Here caste is clearly based on the natural distribution of qualities and their corresponding actions among men. Elsewhere the *Gîtâ* states the same thing in language that cannot be misunderstood at all (XVIII 41—48). It is said here that “the duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sûdras have been distributed according to the qualities born of their own natures,” and that men must undertake the performance of only such duties in life for which they are best fitted by their own natural qualities. Even failure in an appropriate sphere of work is considered to be superior to success in any undertaking for which the man is not by nature suited. This view of caste occurs frequently enough in other portions of the *Mahabhârata* also.

The qualities which determine the class to which, according to the Vedânta, a man may belong are all fully described in the *Gîtâ* (XIV 5-20). They are the *Sattva*, the *Rajas*, and the *Tâmas*. Of these *Sattva* is stainless, luminous, and wholesome, and leads to bliss and wisdom, *Rajas* is of the nature of passion and leads to action, thirst, and attachment, and *Tâmas* is born of ignorance and leads to delusion, dullness, negligence and sloth. To overcome *Rajas* and *Tâmas* so as to retain pure *Sattva* is declared to be the aim of all social life, although the goal of *Moksha* or deliverance from the bondage of material existence, can be reached only by him who has risen beyond the influence of all the three *gunas* or qualities. “They rise upward who are settled in *Sattva*,

the *Rôjasic* dwell in the midmost place ; the *Tâmasic* go downwards engaged in functions which are actuated by the vilest qualities. When the seer sees no agent other than the qualities, (i.e., the *gunas*), and knows also That which is higher than the qualities, he attains My nature.” Such is Sri Krishna’s teaching on the *qualities*, and in this language the ethical progress of the individual may be characterised as a passage from *Tâmas* to *Rajas* and thence on to *Sattva*. We are also taught that actions and qualities act and react upon each other, and that the nature of our work in life is as much determined by what we are as it determines what we are to be. The possession of higher qualities entitles a man to the performance of higher work, and thus gives him a higher social rank ; and the highest manifestation of the *Sattva* nature is expected of the Brahmin to whom belongs the highest rank not by the right of birth but through the possession of all necessary virtue. Sankara, Râmânûja, and Madhwa may all be shewn to support this view of caste distinctly. The Brahmin who does not possess, “serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge, experience and piety” is no Brahmin at all, in the same way in which the Kshatriya who does not possess “heroism, strength, firmness, dexterity, courage, generosity and the power to rule” is no Kshatriya at all. The Vedântic classification of society has thus an altruistic ethical end in view, and is intended as much to improve the conditions of society as to perfect the moral nature of the individual. It is neither wealth nor birth that occupies the position of honour here, but goodness alone is supreme.

But the Vedânta-Sûtras or Aphorisms of Bâdarâyana, while they co-ordinate, in indeed a splendid manner, the Ontological, the Cosmological, and the Ethical teachings of the Upanishads and reduce them to a consistent system, seem to teach what is not warranted by either the *Upanishads* or the *Bhagavadgîtâ* when they try to establish in a far-fetched way that the Sudras are disqualified for Brahminvidya. (II. 3. 34-38). In a similar spirit do the *Sûtras* (III. 4.) try hard to maintain the need of the old ritualism even under the new Vedântic dispensation of knowledge and the light that illumines the heart. In a work entitled *Vedânta-Sâra* attributed to Sankara he distinctly holds that rituals are unnecessary to the seeker after *moksha* ; and a large body of the followers of Râmânûja see in XVIII 66 of the *Gîtâ* the injunction to give up the ritualistic Vedic religion altogether. The *Chhandogya-Upanishad* holds (V. 2. 1) that to him who possesses the Vedântic knowledge of *Brahman* “there is nothing that does not form proper food.” But elsewhere in the same *Upanishad* (VI 26 2) we find this also—“When the food is pure the whole nature (of the person) becomes pure ; when the whole nature becomes pure the memory becomes firm. And when the

in mercy of the Highest Self) remains firm, then all the ties (which binds us to a belief in any thing but the Self) are loosened." It may be made out that restrictions regarding eating have had their origin in the exclusive nature of early ritualistic religions in which eating together always meant the partaking of the same religious communion. And how may people of different religions eat together? When the Vedānta has, however, declared that all are entitled to the worship of the *Atman*, and when the *Gītā* says that all forms of worship are intended to glorify the one supreme *Brahman*, no worshipper of God can offer any thing to the Vedāntin "that does not form proper food." But the Vedānta seems to know, and the *Mahābhārata* has emphatically declared, that the nature of the food taken by a man can and does affect his character. The beef-eating Englishman may laugh at Tolstoi for his advocacy of vegetarianism, and at Mrs. Hatt for saying that too much beef takes away sweetness from the composition of men's character; but with us in India it has long been an axiom that the nature of the food taken is an essentially active element in the determination of the nature of character. Therefore what the *Chhândogya-Upanishad* means is simply this—that if the food is not bad so far as its effects on health and character are concerned it may be taken from the hands of any worshipper of God. The *Vedānta Sūtras* make out, however, that this relaxation of the old *Smṛiti* laws regarding food is meant only for cases of extreme need.

Nevertheless, all the popular religious movements in India actuated by the spirit of the Vedānta have had always in view the liberal universality of the Vedāntic Scriptures. The *Upanishads* and the *Gītā* do not do away with caste, but try to infuse a new ethical and social spirit into that institution. In doing so they clearly recognise the value of the principle of heredity for the purpose of transmitting virtuous qualities from generation to generation. They point to the family as the training ground of all ethical and social virtues; and with women of the stamp of Maitreyī and Gārgī, of whom Vedāntic literature gives us an interesting account, every family may well become the divinely ordered home of all true human perfection. Thus the exercise of much discretion, wisdom, choice and self-restraint is found to be necessary in regard to the relation between the sexes, when husband and wife and parents and children have all to be dear to each other not merely as such, but as the embodiments of the stainlessly blissful Supreme Soul. Further, the outer forms of the old idea of caste seem to be retained, with the new spirit of the Vedānta infused into them, for the purpose of making it difficult for knowledge, power, and wealth getting concentrated in the same place. Knowledge leads to power, and power to the acquisition of wealth naturally, and their concentration anywhere tends to stimulate jealousy, envy, self-assertion and egoism in society. The Vedānta calls upon the knowing

man not to seek power or wealth, it calls upon the powerful man not to seek wealth, and it exhorts the wealthy man to find his salvation through charity and the acquisition of true knowledge. It is difficult to keep knowledge, power and wealth fully separated from one another in any society howsoever organised, and in Western countries the chief danger to society may now be seen to arise from the undue concentration of knowledge, power and wealth in the same place. New influences from the West are slowly introducing through various channels that same danger to India also before the leaven of Vedānta has had time and scope to leaven the whole of society; but is it too much to hope that her Vedāntic social ideal may yet prove the source of salvation to all her sons and daughters?

Translations.

VEDARTHA SANGRAHA.

By S'RI' RA'MA'NĀJA.

Now, this is what has been stated.—By means of the passage "All this is what has Him for soul," it is, after indicating the universe made up of the sentient and the non-sentient as "all this," clearly enunciated that He is the "soul" of that universe. And this means that (the idea of) the *Brahman* being the soul has been put forth in regard to the universe.

Then (this idea of) the *Brahman* being the soul (of the universe—whether it is so in the way of the relation between body and soul, or whether it is in the way of inherent nature itself, has to be distinguished. If (the universe be *Brahman*) in the way of inherent nature itself, then the quality of willing the truth and other similar qualities (of the *Brahman*), learnt from the commencement "It willed, may I become many," become injuriously affected. But if (it be so) in the way of the relation between body and soul, (the idea of) That (viz., *Brahman*) being the soul is very well confirmed by the other scriptural passage which says "Having entered in, He, the Soul of All, is the Ruler of all that is born." In the capacity of the soul which is of the nature of the ruler, He "has entered into" all creatures that are born. Therefore the idea of *Brahman* being the soul is well understood to be this, namely, that "He is the soul of all," the soul of all creatures that are born, and that all is His "body."

There is, moreover, the passage, "He who resides in the soul, who is behind it, whom the soul does not know, to whom the soul is body, and who guides the soul from behind, He is your immortal all-pervading Soul." Further it has also been stated here already that by means of the words "with this *Jīvātman*" this same thing is made out. Therefore, seeing that all sentient and non-sentient things

form the body of *Brahman* and that all words denote the *Brahman* which has all for its body and is of all modes, by means of the identity "That thou (art)" that *Brahman* alone, which, having the *Jīva* (i.e., the soul) for the body, is of the mode of the *Jīva*, has been mentioned. When it is so mentioned this is the idea that is implied—He, who, as "Thou" (i.e., thy *Jīva*), has been hitherto known as the inherent ruler of thy body, being a mode of the Supreme Soul because of his forming the body of the Supreme Soul, includes even the Supreme Soul (in regard to meaning). Therefore the word "Thou" denotes certainly his (i.e., the *Jīva*'s) Pervader qualified as a modification which is he (i.e., the *Jīva*), because, as (brought out) in the passage "Having entered in with this *Jīvātman* I develop names and forms," the *Jīva* can have the body-potessor's (i.e., the Supreme Soul's) own name only in consequence of having the *Brahman* for its soul.

KARMA-YOGA.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

According to the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy there are in nature three kinds of forces, called in Sanskrit—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. These as manifested in the physical world are what we may call, attraction, repulsion, and the control of the two. *Sattva* is what exercises the control, *Rajas* is the repulsion, while *Tamas* is the attraction. *Tamas* is typified as darkness or inactivity, *Rajas* is activity, where each particle is trying to fly off from the attracting centre; and *Sattva* is the equilibrium of the two, giving a due balancing of both.

Now in every man there are these three forces; in each of us we find that sometimes the *Tamas* prevails, we become lazy, we cannot move, we are inactive, weighed down by certain ideas or by mere dullness. At other times activity prevails, we try as it were to fly off the centre, then again, at other times that calm balancing of both these temperaments, so to say,—the *Sattva*—prevails. Again in different men a different one of these forces is generally predominant. The characteristic of one man is inactivity, dullness and laziness, the characteristic of another man is activity, power, manifestation of energy, and in a third man we may find the sweetness, the calmness and the gentleness which are due to the balancing of both action and inaction. So in all creation—in animals, in plants, and in men—we find the more or less typical manifestation of all these different forces.

Karma-Yoga has specially to deal with these three elements or tendencies of nature. By teaching us what they are and how we are to employ them, it helps us to do our work in life the better. Human society is a well-ordered organization in which there are different grades and status. We all know what is meant by morality, we all know what is meant by duty, but at the same time we

find that in different countries the significance of morality varies greatly. What is regarded as moral in one country, in another may be perfectly immoral. For instance in one country cousins may marry, in another it is thought to be very immoral to do so; in one country people may marry only once; in another many times; and so forth. So in all other departments of morality we find that the standard varies greatly; yet we have the idea that there must be a universal standard of morality.

So it is with duty. The idea of duty varies much among different nations in one country, if a man does not do certain things, people will say he has acted wrongly, and if he does those very things in another country, people will still say that he did not act rightly, and yet we know that there must be some universal idea of duty. In the same way, one class of society thinks that certain things are among its duty, and another class thinks quite the opposite, and would be horrified if it had to do those things.

Two ways are left open to us, either the way of the ignorant, who think that there is only one road to truth, and that all the others are wrong, or the way of the wise, who admit that according to the mental constitution, are the different planes of cultured existence in which men are, duty and morality may vary. So the important thing to know is that there are gradations of duty and of morality, that what is the duty of one state of life, in one state of circumstances, will not and cannot be that of another.

The following example will serve to illustrate this—All great teachers have taught "Resist not evil," have taught that the non-resisting of evil is the highest moral ideal. We all know that if, in the present state of the world, people, try to carry out this doctrine, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, society would be destroyed, the violent and the wicked would take possession of our property, and possibly take our lives also. Even one day of such non-resistance would lead to the utter dissolution of society. Yet, intuitively, in our heart of hearts we feel the truth of the teaching, "Resist not evil." This seems to us to be the highest ideal to aim at, yet to teach this doctrine only, would be equivalent to condemning a vast proportion of mankind. Not only so, it would be making men feel that they were always doing wrong, and cause scruples of conscience in relation to all their actions: it would weaken them, as that kind of constant self-disapproval and self-condemnation would breed more weakness than any other defect. To the man who has begun to hate himself, the gate to degeneration has already become wide open, and this is true with whole nations as well.

Our first duty is, then, not to hate ourselves, because to advance, we must have faith in ourselves first, and then in God. He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God. Therefore the only alternative that remains to us is to recognize that duty, morality, and all those things vary under different circumstances, not that the man who resists evil is doing what is always and unmit-

wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may become his duty to do so.

Some of you have read, perhaps, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and many of you in western countries, may have felt astonished at the first chapter wherein our Sri Krishna calls Arjuna a hypocrite and a coward, on account of his refusal to fight, or offer resistance, because his adversaries were his friends and relatives,—his refusal on the plea that non-resistance was the highest ideal of love. There is a great lesson for us all to learn, that in all things the two extremes are alike; the extreme positive and the extreme negative are always similar. When the vibrations of light are too slow we do not see them, nor do we see them, when they are too rapid; so also with sound; when very low in pitch we do not hear it, when very high we do not hear it either. Of like nature is the difference between resistance and non-resistance. One man does not resist because he is weak, lazy, and cannot; not because he will not; the other man knows that he can strike an irresistible blow if he likes, yet not only does not strike, but blesses his enemies. The one who, from weakness resists not evil commits a sin, and cannot derive any benefit from his non-resistance; the other would equally surely commit a sin by offering resistance. Buddha gave up his throne and renounced his position; that was true renunciation; but there cannot be any question of renunciation in the case of a beggar who has nothing to renounce. We must always be careful about what we really mean when we speak of this non-resistance and ideal love. We must first take care to understand whether we have the power of resistance or not. Then, having the power, if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a grand act of love; but if we cannot resist, yet, at the same time, try to make it appear and ourselves believe that we are actuated by motives of the highest love, we are doing the exact opposite of what is morally good. Arjuna became a coward at the sight of the mighty array against him; his "love" made him forget his duty towards his country and king. That is why Sri Krishna told him that he was a hypocrite: "Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy actions betray thee to be a coward; therefore stand up and fight."

Such is the central idea of the *Karma-Yoga*. The *Karma-Yogin* is the man who understands that the highest ideal is non-resistance, which is indeed the highest ideal and the most beautiful manifestation of power in actual possession, and he understands also that what is called the resisting of evil is but a step on the way towards the manifestation of the highest power which is non-resistance. Before reaching fittingly this highest ideal man's duty is to resist evil: let him work, let him fight, let him strike "straight from the shoulder." Only when he has gained the power to resist will non-resistance be a virtue.

I once met a man in my country whom I had known before as a very stupid, dull person who knew nothing and had not the desire to know anything, and was living the life of a brute. He

asked me what he should do to know God, how he was to get free. "Can you tell a lie?" I asked him. "No," he replied. "Then you must learn to do so. It is better to tell a lie than to be a brute, or a log of wood; you are inactive; you are not certainly of the highest state, which is beyond all actions, calm and serene; you are too dull even to do something wicked." That was an extreme case, of course, and I was in joke with him, but what I meant was, that a man must be active, in order to pass through activity to perfect calmness. Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical, and when you have succeeded in resisting, then will the calmness of non-resistance come. It is very easy to say "Hate not anybody, resist not any evil," but we all know what that invariably means. When the eyes of Society are turned towards us, we make a show of non-resistance, but in our hearts it is canker all the time. We feel the utter want of the calm of non-resistance; we feel that it would be better for us to resist. If you desire wealth and know that the whole world will tell you that he who aims at wealth is a very wicked man, you, naturally, do not dare to plunge into the struggle for wealth; yet at the same time, the mind is running day and night after money. This is hypocrisy, and will serve no purpose. Plunge into the world, and then, after a time, when you have enjoyed and found hollow all that is in it, will renunciation come, then will calmness come. So fulfil your desire for power and everything else, and after you have fulfilled the desire, will come the time when you will know that these are all very little things; but until you have fulfilled this desire, until you have passed through that activity, it is impossible for you to come to that state of calmness and serenity which is characterised by sincere renunciation and honest non-resistance. These ideas of serenity and the calmness of self-surrender have been preached for thousands of years; everybody born has heard of them from his childhood, and yet we see very few in the world that have really reached that stage of moral perfection. I do not know if I have seen twenty persons in my life who were really calm and non-resisting, and I have travelled over half the world.

Every man should take up his own ideal and endeavor to accomplish it; that is a surer way of progress than taking up other men's ideals, which he can never hope to accomplish. For instance, we take a baby and at once give him the task of walking twenty miles; either the baby dies, or one in a thousand will, if at all, crawl over the twenty miles to reach the end exhausted and half dead. That is, curiously enough, what we generally try to do with the world. All the men and women in any society are not of the same capacity. Each must have his or her own different ideals, and we have no right to sneer at any ideal. Let every one do the best he can to realise his own ideal; I should not be judged by yours, nor you by mine. The apple tree should not be judged by the standard of the oak, nor the oak by that of the apple. To judge the apple tree you must take the apple

standard, and for the oak there is its own standard, and so with all of us.

Unity in variety is the plan of creation. However men and women may vary individually there is unity in the background. The different individual characters and classes of men and women are natural variations in the law of creation. Hence we ought not to judge them by the same standard, or put the same ideal before them. Such a course creates only an unnatural struggle far other than profitable, and the result is that man begins to hate himself and is hindered from becoming truly religious and good.

In the Hindu system of morality we find that this fact has been recognized from very ancient times; and in their scriptures and books on ethics different rules are laid down for the different classes of men, as also for the householder, the *sanyâsin* (the man who has renounced the world), and the student. The life of every individual in *Karma*, according to the Hindu scriptures, is divided into several parts. The Hindu begins life as a student; then he marries and becomes a householder, then after becoming old he retires, and lastly he gives up the world and becomes a *Sanyâsin*. To each of these stages of life certain duties are allotted. No one of these stages of life is superior to the other: the life of the married man is quite as great as that of the man who is not married, but has devoted himself to some worthy work. The king on his throne is as great and glorious as the scavenger in the street. Take him off his throne, make him do the work of the scavenger, and see how he fares. Take up the scavenger and see how he will rule. It is useless to say that the man who lives out of the world is a greater man than he who lives in the world; it is much more difficult to live in the world and worship God, than to give up the world and live a nice and easy life of rest and retirement. The various stages of life have become shortened in India to two,—that of the householder and that of the preacher. The householder marries and carries on his duties as a citizen, and the duties of the other are to preach and to worship God. Now you will see whose life is the more difficult one. As I read on to you a few beautiful passages from the *Mahâ Nârâyaṇa-Pân̄tha*, which treats of this subject, you will see that it is a very difficult task for a man to be a householder and perform all his duties perfectly.

"The householder should be devoted to God, the knowledge of God should be his goal of life. Yet he must work constantly, perform all his duties, whatever he does he must give it up to God."

It is the most difficult thing to do in this world, to work and not care for the result, to help a man and never think that he ought to be grateful to you, to do some good work and at the same time never look to see whether it brings you some reward, or brings nothing at all. Even the most arrogant coward becomes a brave man when the world begins to praise him. A fool can do his duty. As when the approbation of society is on him, but for a man to do constantly good works without counting or caring

for the approbation of his fellow-men is indeed the highest sacrifice any man can perform. The great duty of the householder is to earn a living, but he must take care that he does not get it by telling lies, or by cheating, or by robbing others; and he must remember that his life is for the service of God, his life is for the service of the poor and the needy.

"Knowing that mother and father are the visible representatives of God, the householder always, and by all means, must please them. If the mother is pleased and the father, God is pleased with that man. That child is really a good child who never speaks harsh words to his parents.

"Before parents one must not utter jokes, must not show restlessness, must not show anger or temper. Before mother or father, a child must bow down low, and he must stand up in their presence, and must not take a seat until they order him to sit.

"If the householder enjoys food and drink and clothes without first seeing that his mother and his father, his children, his wife, and the poor, are supplied, he is committing a sin. The mother and the father are the causes of this body, so a man must undergo a thousand troubles in order to do good to them.

"Even so is his duty to his wife; no man should scold his wife, and he must always maintain her as if she were his own mother. And even when he is in the greatest difficulties and troubles, he must not show anger to his wife.

"He who thinks of another woman besides his wife—if he touches her mentally with the least part of his mind—that man goes to dark hell. Even in private no man ought to touch another woman, or her clothes, even when she is not there the clothes owned by any woman other than his wife should not be touched.

"Before women he must not talk improper language, and never brag of his powers. He must not say 'I have done this, and I have done that.'

"The householder must always please his wife with wealth, clothes, love, faith, and words like nectar, and never do anything to disturb her. That man who has succeeded in getting the love of a chaste wife has succeeded in his religion and has all the virtues."

The following are duties towards children:—

"A son should be well taken care of until he is four years of age, after that he should be educated. When he is 20 years of age the father must not think of him as a little boy; he then is his own equal, being a householder himself. Exactly in the same manner the daughter should be brought up, and with the greatest care should be educated. And when she marries, the father ought to give her jewels and wealth.

"Then the duty of the man is towards his brothers and sisters, and towards the children of his brothers and sisters, if they are poor, and towards his other relatives, his friends and his servants. Then his duties are towards the people of the same village, and the poor, and any one that comes to him for help. Having sufficient means, if the householder does not take care to give gifts to his relatives and

to the poor, know him to be only a brute, he is not a human being.

"Excessive care in food, in clothes, and in self-love, and taking excessive care in beautifying the body and parting the hair should be avoided. The householder must be pure in heart and clean in body, always a five and always ready for work.

"To his enemies the householder must be a hero. Them he must resist. That is the duty of the householder." He must not sit down in a corner and weep, and talk nonsense about non-resistance. If he does not show himself a hero to his enemies he has not done his duty. And to his friends and relatives he must be as gentle as a lamb.

"It is the duty of the householder not to pay reverence to the wicked; because, if he reverences the wicked people of the world, he patronises wickedness, and it will be a great mistake if he disregards those who are worthy of respect, the good people. He must not be gushing in his friendships; he must not go out making friends everywhere, he must watch the actions of the men he wants to make friends with, and their dealings with other men, reason upon them, and then make friends.

"These three things he must not talk of. He must not talk in public of his, his own fame; he must not preach his own name or his own powers; he must not talk of his wealth, or of anything that has been mentioned to him privately.

"If he has committed some mistake, and if he has engaged himself in a work which is sure to fail, whether big or small, he must not talk of these things, or make them public." What is the use of talking of one's mistakes to the world? They cannot be undone. For what he has done he must suffer, he as a householder must try and do better. The world sympathises only with the strong and the powerful.

"A man must not say he is poor, or that he is wealthy—he must not brag of his wealth. Let him keep his own counsel, this is his religious duty." This is not mere worldly wisdom; if a man does not do so, he may be held to be immoral.

The householder is the basis, the prop, of the whole society; he is the principal earner. Everybody—the poor, the weak, the children and the women who do not work—all live upon the householder; so there must be certain duties that he has to perform, and these duties must make him feel strong to perform them, and not make him think that he is doing things beneath his ideal. Therefore, if he has done something weak, or has committed some mistake, he must not say so in public; and if he is engaged in some enterprise and knows he is sure to fail in it he must not speak of it. Such self-exposure is not only uncalled for, but also unnerves the man and makes him unfit for the performance of his legitimate duties in life. At the same time, he must struggle hard to acquire these things—firstly knowledge, and secondly wealth. It is his duty, and if he does not do his duty he is nobody. A householder who does not struggle to get wealth is immoral. If he is lazy, and content to lead a lazy life, he is immoral, because upon him

depend hundreds. If he gets riches hundreds of others will be thereby supported.

If there were not in this city hundreds who had striven to become rich, and who had acquired wealth, where would all this civilisation and these almshouses and great houses be?

Going after wealth in such a case is not bad, because that wealth is for distribution. The householder is the centre of life and society. It is a worship for him to acquire and spend wealth nobly, for the householder who struggles to get rich by good means and for good purposes is doing practically the same thing for the attainment of salvation as the anchorite does in his cell when he is praying, for in them we see only the different aspects of the same virtue of self-surrender and self-sacrifice prompted by the feeling of devotion to God and to all that is His.

"He must struggle to acquire a good name by all means; and he must give up these things—he must not gamble; he must not move in the companionship of the wicked, he must not tell lies, and must not be the cause of trouble to others."

Often people enter into things they have not the means to accomplish, and the result is that they cheat others to attain their own ends. Then there is in all things the time factor to be taken into consideration; what at one time might be a failure, would perhaps, at another time be a very great success.

"The householder must speak truth, and speak gently, using words which people like, which will do good to others; neither must he brag of his own doings, nor talk of the business of other men.

"The householder by constructing reservoirs for holding water, by planting trees on the roadsides, by establishing almshouses for men and animals, by making roads and building bridges, goes towards the same goal as the greatest *Yogi*."

This is one part of the doctrine of *Karma-Yoga*—activity, the duty of the householder. There is a line later on, where it says that "if the householder dies in battle, fighting for his country or his religion, he comes to the same goal as the *Yogi* by meditation," showing thereby that what is duty for one is not duty for another; at the same time, it does not say that this duty is lowering and the other elevating; each duty has its own place and fitness, and according to the circumstances in which we are placed, so must we perform our duties.

One idea comes out of all this, the condemnation of all weakness. This is a particular idea in all our teachings which I like, either in philosophy, or in religion, or in work. If you read the Vedas you will find this word always repeated—"fearlessness"—fear nothing. Fear is a sign of weakness. A man must go about his duties without taking notice of the sneers and the ridicule of the world. If a man gives up and goes out of the world to worship God, he must not think that those who live in the world and work for the good of the world are not worshipping God; neither must those who live in the world, for wife and children, think that those who give up the world are low vagabonds. Each is great in his own place.

This thought I will illustrate by a story.

A certain King used to inquire of all the *Sanyāsins* that came to his country, which is the greater man—he who gives up the world and becomes a *Sanyāsin*, or he who lives in the world and performs his duties as a householder. Many wise men tried to solve this problem. Some asserted that the *Sanyāsin* was the greater, upon which the King demanded that they should prove their assertion. When they could not, he ordered them to marry and become householders. Then theirs came and said "The householder who performs his duties is the greater man." Of them, too, the King demanded proofs. When they could not give them he made them also settle down as householders. At last there came a young *Sanyāsin* and the King put the same question to him. He answered "Each, O King, is equally great in his place." "Prove this to me," said the King. "I will prove it to you," said the *Sanyāsin*, "But you must first come and live as I do for a few days, that I may be able to prove to you what I say." The King consented and followed the *Sanyāsin* out of his own territory and passed through many territories, until they came to another kingdom. In the capital of that kingdom a great ceremony was going on. The King and the *Sanyāsin* heard the sound of drums and music, and cries and the people were assembled in the streets in gala dress, and a great proclamation was being made. The King and the *Sanyāsin* stood there to see what was going on. The crier was saying that the princess, the daughter of the King of that country, was going to choose a husband from among those assembled before her.

It was an old custom in India for princesses to choose husbands in this way, and apparently each one of them had certain ideas of the sort of man she wanted for a husband, some would have the handsomest man; others would have only the most learned, others would have the richest, and so on. The princess, in the most splendid array, was carried on a throne, and the announcement was made by criers that the princess so-and-so was about to choose a husband. Then all the princes of the neighbourhood put on their bravest attire and presented themselves before her. Sometimes they, too, had their own criers to enumerate their advantages, and the reasons why they hoped the princess would choose them. The princess was taken round and looked at them and heard what they had to offer, and if she was not pleased she asked her bearers to move on, and no more notice was taken of the rejected suitors. If however the princess was pleased with any one of them, she threw a garland upon him and he became her husband.

The princess of the country to which our King and the *Sanyāsin* had come was having one of these interesting ceremonies. She was the most beautiful princess of the world, and the husband of the princess would be ruler of the kingdom after her father's death. The idea of this princess was to marry the handsomest man, but she could not find the right one to please her. Several times these meetings had taken place, and yet the princess had not selected any one. This meeting was the most

splendid of all; more people than ever had come to it, and it was a most gorgeous scene. The princess came in on a throne, and the bearers carried her from place to place. She does not seem to care for anyone even on this occasion, and everyone has almost become disappointed that this meeting too is to be broken up without anyone being chosen as the husband of the princess. Just then comes a young man, a *Sanyāsin* as handsome as if the sun had come down to the earth, and he stands in one corner of the assembly seeing what is going on. The throne with the princess comes near him, and as soon as she sees the beautiful *Sanyāsin*, she stops and throws the garland over him. The young *Sanyāsin* seizes the garland and throws it off, exclaiming "What nonsense do you mean by that? I am a *Sanyāsin*, what is marriage to me?" The King of that country thinks that perhaps this man is poor, so does not dare to marry the princess; so he says to him "with my daughter goes half my kingdom now, and the whole kingdom after my death," and puts the garland again on the *Sanyāsin*. The young man throws it off once more, saying "What nonsense is this? I do not want to marry," and walks quickly away from the assembly.

Now the princess fell so much in love with this young man that she said "I must marry this man or I shall die," and she went after him to bring him back. Then our other *Sanyāsin*, who had brought our King there because of the controversy, said to the King—"King, let us follow this pair," so they walked after them, but at a good distance behind. The young *Sanyāsin* who had refused to marry the princess, walked out into the country for several miles, when he came to a forest, and struck into it, and the princess followed him, and the other two followed them. Now this young *Sanyāsin* was well acquainted with that forest, and knew all the intricate passages in it, and suddenly he jumped into one of these and disappeared, and the princess could not discover him. After trying for a long time to find him, she sat down under a tree and began to weep, for she did not know the way to get out of the forest again. Then our King and the other *Sanyāsin* came up to her and said "Do not weep, we will show you the way out of this forest, but it is too dark for us to find it now. Here is a big tree: let us rest under it, and in the morning we will go early and show you the road to get out. Now a little bird and his wife and three little baby-birds lived on that tree in a nest. This little bird looked down and saw the three people under the tree, and said to his wife, My dear, what shall be done, here are some guests in the house, and it is winter, and we have no fire?" So he flew away and got a bit of burning firewood in his beak and dropped it before the guests and they added fuel to it and made a blazing fire. But the little bird was not satisfied, he said again to his wife "My dear, what shall we do, there is nothing to give these people to eat, and they are hungry and we are householders; it is our duty to feed anyone who comes to the house. I must do what I can, I will give them my body." So he plunged down into the midst of the fire and

perished. The guests saw him falling and tried to save him, but he was too quick for them, and dashed into the fire and was killed. The little bird's wife saw what her husband did and she said "Here are three persons and only one little bird for them to eat; it is not enough; it is my duty as a wife not to let my husband's effort be in vain; let them have my body also", and she plunged down into the fire and was burned to death. Then the three baby-birds, when they saw what was done, and that there was still not enough food for the three guests, said "Our parents have done what they could and still it is not enough; it is our duty to carry on the work of our parents; let our bodies go too", and they all dashed down into the fire. The three people could not eat these birds, and they were amazed at what they saw. Somehow or other they passed the night without food, and in the morning the King and the *Sanyāsin* showed the princess the way, and she went back to her father. Then the *Sanyāsin* said to the King:—"King, you have seen that each is great in his own place. If you want to live in the world, live like those birds, ready at any moment to sacrifice yourself for others. If you want to renounce the world be like that young man, to whom the most beautiful woman and a kingdom were as nothing. If you want to be a householder hold your life a sacrifice for the welfare of others; and if you choose the life of renunciation, do not even look at beauty and money and power. Each is great in his own place, but the duty of the one is not the duty of the other."

After the battle of Kurukshetra, the five Pāndava brothers performed a great sacrifice and made very large gifts to the poor. All the people expressed amazement at the greatness and richness of the sacrifice, and said that such a sacrifice the world had never seen before. But, after the ceremony, there came a little mongoose; half his body was golden and the other half was brown, and he began to roll on the floor of the sacrificial hall. Then he said to those round "You are all liars; this is no sacrifice." "What!" they exclaimed "you say this is no sacrifice; do you not know how money and jewels were poured out upon the poor and every one became rich and happy? This was the most wonderful sacrifice any man ever performed." But the mongoose said thus—There was once a little village, and in it there dwelt a poor Brahmin, with his wife, his son and his son's wife. They were very poor and lived on alms gained by preaching and teaching, for which men occasionally made small gifts to them. There came in that land a three years' famine, and the poor Brahmin suffered more than ever. At last for five days the family starved, but on the sixth day the father brought home a little barley flour which he had been fortunate enough to find, and he divided it into four parts, one for each of them. They prepared it for their meal and just as they were about to eat it a knock came at the door. The father opened it and there stood a guest. Now in India a guest is sacred, he is as God for the time being and must be treated as such. So the poor Brahmin said "Come in Sir; you are welcome." He set before

the guest his own portion of food, and the latter quickly ate it up, and then said "Oh, sir, you have killed me, I have been starving for ten days and this little bit has but increased my hunger." Then the wife said to her husband "Give him my share," but the husband said "Not so." The wife, however, insisted, saying "Here is a poor man and it is our duty as householders to see that he is fed and it is my duty as a wife to give him my portion, seeing that you have no more to offer him." Then she gave her share to the guest and he ate it up and said he was still burning with hunger. So the son said "Take my portion also, it is the duty of a son to help his father to fulfil his obligations." The guest ate that, but remained still unsatisfied, so the son's wife gave him her portion also. That was sufficient and the guest departed, blessing them. That night those four people died of starvation. A few granules of that flour had fallen on the ground, and when I rolled on them half of my body became golden, as you see it. Since then I have been all over the world, hoping to find another sacrifice like that, but never have I found one; nowhere else has the other half of my body been turned into gold. That is why I say this is no sacrifice.

This idea of charity is going out of India; grand men are becoming less and less. When I was first learning English I read an English story book, where the first story was about a dutiful boy who had gone out to work and had given some of his money to his old mother, and this was praised in three or four pages. What was that? No Hindu boy could ever understand that story. Now I understand it when I hear the Western idea—every man for himself. And some men take everything, and fathers and mothers, and wives and children go to the wall. That should never and nowhere be the ideal of the householder.

Now you see what *Karma-Yoga* means; even at the point of death to help anyone, without asking questions. Be cheated millions of times and never ask a question, and never think of what you are doing. Never vaunt of your gifts to the poor or expect their gratitude, but rather be grateful to them for giving you the occasion of practising charity on them. Thus it is plain that to be an ideal householder is a much more difficult task than to be an ideal *Sanyāsin*; the true life of work is indeed harder than the equally true life of renunciation.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Brahmavādin

Two weeks of hard and unremitting work have passed since the Swami's return to this country. Without allowing himself a minute's rest he at once resumed his difficult task of propagating in our midst the sublime message of which he is the bearer. During this short time he lectured sever-

teen times, mornings and evenings, and it is only on account of the Christmas holidays that he finds himself compelled to take an involuntary, but much needed rest of a few days. He has every reason to be satisfied with the result of his gigantic efforts. The classes are well attended and the number of those who attend is constantly increasing. He has gathered around himself a circle of faithful followers who, together with the Newspapers (which are only too glad to publish extracts of his teachings,) help to spread the religion and philosophy of the land of Bharata throughout the whole of *Pôlila* (the Antipodes).

The Swami has introduced an innovation in the ministerial procedure of this country at which, I am afraid, the clergy here will not feel much delighted. He charges no fees; either for his class lessons or public lectures. The first question asked by the men and women who for the first time come to hear the Swami, is "How much have I to pay?" and when they are told that he has no religion for sale, but welcomes everybody who wants to come to God, it simply passes their understanding that a man could be so unpractical as to give away something without asking for any return. The whole movement is carried on by voluntary contributions, just sufficient to defray the necessary expenses for hall rent, etc. A few members have raised a fund for engaging a shorthand-writer in order to take down all of the Swami's lectures. A copy of the notes will be sent to the *Brahmavādin* for the benefit of its readers.

Commencing with Sunday, January 5th, the Swami begins a series of free public Sunday lectures on various religious and philosophical topics, to be given at Hardeman Hall.

From England we receive very encouraging reports. The seed sown there by the Swami is beginning to bear fruit. His followers are holding regular weekly meetings which are well attended and impatiently await the return of the master to get fresh inspiration. We feel assured that both here and in England the Vedānta has come to stay.

K.

NEW YORK, December 23rd, 1895.

Reviews.

We have been favoured with a copy of the 17th Annual Report of the Madhwa Siddhāntamahā Sabha held at Tirupaty for the year Jaya (1894-95). The Sabha was brought into existence for the purpose of looking after the spiritual interests of the Madhwa community (1) by providing for the conduct of examinations, Oral and Written, to test the knowledge of Madhwa students in the religious literature of the sect; (2) by bringing together Madhwa Pandits and Vaidikas from different parts of the country so as to promote a better understanding and *esprit de corps* among them and to enable them to discuss and pronounce on all questions affecting the social and spiritual welfare of the community; (3) by giving lay men opportunities of improving their knowledge of their religion, of quickening their zeal

on its behalf, and of supporting and advancing its cause by every means in their power. We are glad to be able to state that during these 17 years of its existence, the Sabha has striven to attain these objects with the earnestness and resources placed at its disposal. Its Secretary, Mr. Kanchi Subba Rao, (Retd Dy. Collr.) has been the life and soul of the movement from its commencement, and we are glad to note that his enthusiasm and efforts on its behalf continue unabated. He has brought into existence a great machinery for the collection and remittance of funds, and the Sabha owes its present financial prosperity chiefly to his exertions and power of organisation. We note that every district of the Presidency and even places outside its limits have been laid under contribution through the agency of the Sabha, and that during the year under Review the Secretary visited in person Hyderabad and other places on its behalf. At the meeting of the Sabha now reported on, the usual programme of examinations, discussions and rewards was gone through. We notice also that some original works in literature and religion were produced, and their authors duly rewarded for their pains. A new feature of the year was the delivery of open air lectures and sermons, and this, we are informed, was much appreciated. Arrangements were also made as usual for holding Bhajana and Harikirtana meetings, and at more than one meeting of laymen various questions of a practical nature affecting the spiritual and social interests of the community were discussed.

While expressing our warm appreciation of the general aims and working of the Sabha, and of the strenuous efforts of its energetic and zealous Secretary on behalf of his faith and sect, we have to offer a word of criticism and regret to have to point to certain unsatisfactory features connected with the movement. We fear that much too large a portion of the available funds is devoted to feeding the visitors. The question was in fact raised at the last meeting of the Sabha, but was after some discussion shelved. In the second place, we find that an appreciable amount of sectarian animosity towards other systems of Hindu faith is encouraged or permitted to find expression at these meetings, and we would point out that there is not the least necessity or justification for permitting its indulgence, more especially because the funds for the holding of the Sabha's meetings are contributed by men of all sections of the community. In the third place, we are unable to see any reason why the Sabha should commence its report with a long, rambling and more or less bitter polemic of several pages against the aims and merits of the social reform movement especially when at a meeting of pundits, to whom a formal reference was made, a pronouncement was given in regard to the question of widow re-marrriage; and a similar course is always open to the Sabha on other questions connected with the reform movement. We also hold a similar view in regard to the elaborate statement of Hindu theology, cosmogony, &c, embodied in pp 16-24 of the Report, in reply to certain questions put by a young student in Triplicane.

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